



**HAATH
BADLEGA
HALAAT**

Jammu & Kashmir Manifesto-2024





The Jammu and Kashmir Pradesh Congress Committee presents the Manifesto for the forthcoming Elections to the J&K Legislative Assembly 2024.

Our goal is to defeat the forces of obscurantism and bigotry who contributed nothing to the Freedom Movement or the making of our Constitution and whose sole objective has been to subvert our millennial heritage and composite nationhood. It is our sacred duty to fight divisive forces. The Congress party has no difficulty in cooperating with like-minded parties towards this goal.

An Appeal

This is the time for going to the basics; the basics that have formed our essence; the basics that provided the impetus to our Independence movement; the basics that have built a modern, self-reliant and self-confident India. This is the time for us to reestablish the core values that have ensured India's Unity.

The harshest blow was that our citizens have lost their faith in the words of the Prime Minister and his ineffective government. The PM has given us only grandiose promises, empty slogans, failed programmes, false statistics, corruption and a climate of fear, intimidation and hatred.

In this time of deep crisis, the Indian National Congress offers to the people, the only alternative available. It is a distinct alternative that is unwavering in its commitment to truth, freedom, dignity, self-respect and prosperity for our people. We promise to make India strong and united, and a just and prosperous society.

Our manifesto reflects our commitment to a higher vision, that of listening to the Inner Voice. It is not the 'Mann ki Baat' of one individual but the collective voice of crores of people. We have used all possible tools - Website, WhatsApp, Email, online petitions, and meetings with citizens, experts, stakeholders and grassroots activists. The Manifesto Committee of the J&K Pradesh Congress Committee held discussions with a wide variety of people.

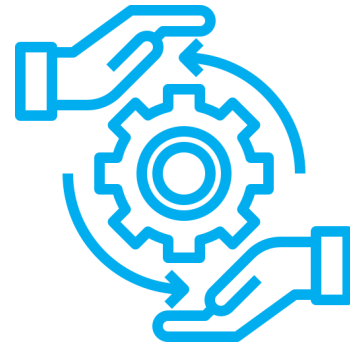
This is our commitment.

Congress promises and it also delivers.

Saifuddin Soz

*Chairman, Manifesto
Committee*

Governance



- 1.** We will provide inclusive and accountable governance by ensuring that the Central Government grants statehood to Jammu and Kashmir.
- 2.** We will restore the 149-year tradition of Summer and Winter Capitals in Srinagar and Jammu respectively by passing in the first resolution of the first Assembly session in favour of the Durbar Move.
- 3.** We will give first preference to those domiciled in Jammu and Kashmir for jobs, government contracts, land allocation and natural resource concessions.
- 4.** We will bring a White Paper on corruption and establish a Lokayukta within the first 100 days to investigate all charges against officials – serving and retired – allegedly involved in scams over the past ten years.
- 5.** We will empower all elected MLAs to ensure the development of their respective constituencies for speedy redressal of the people's grievances.
- 6.** We will restore the Legislative Council and add constituencies to represent sections that are inadequately represented in the Assembly such as OBCs, Minorities, Ex-Servicemen, pensioners, teachers, experts etc.
- 7.** We will hold Panchayat and Urban Local Body (ULB) elections under the 73rd & 74th Constitutional amendments at the earliest. We will incorporate an Ombudsperson to investigate cases of corruption.
- 8.** There will be no evictions from lands in continuous occupation by poor people and farmers – especially landless, small and marginal farmers – until a fair and transparent land policy is prepared within six months. Forest dwellers will also be conferred rights under the Forest Rights Act within six months.
- 9.** We will implement the Public Services Guarantee Act in letter and spirit and check the loopholes in the system.

10. We will consider the demand to create a PoJK Displaced Persons (DP) and Refugees Board for their welfare and press for the implementation of the 2014 financial package as recommended by the Congress-led State Government to the Central Government and endorsed by the Parliamentary Standing Committee:

■ We will confer all rights on DPs from 1947, 1965 and 1971 and West Pakistan refugees including rights to sell and transfer allotted state land and Evacuee Properties

■ We will reexamine genuine cases of unregistered and excluded 1947 DPs and refugees and accordingly confer them due rights and a financial package

■ We will regularise DP and Refugee bastis and camps





Employment

1. We will give an Unemployment allowance to qualified youth of up to ₹3,500 per month for one year.
2. We will fill 1 lakh vacant government posts and provide a Job Calendar within the first 30 days to fill them.
3. Job applicants will pay an exam fee only once a year even if they apply many times.
4. We will fill district cadre posts through district recruitment boards with preference to local youth.
5. We will fill vacancies at various levels to address shortages of teachers.
6. We will clear the withheld and pending RET appointments in six months.
7. Closed schools in hard zones to be provided teachers on an ad hoc basis immediately, followed by a fresh recruitment policy.

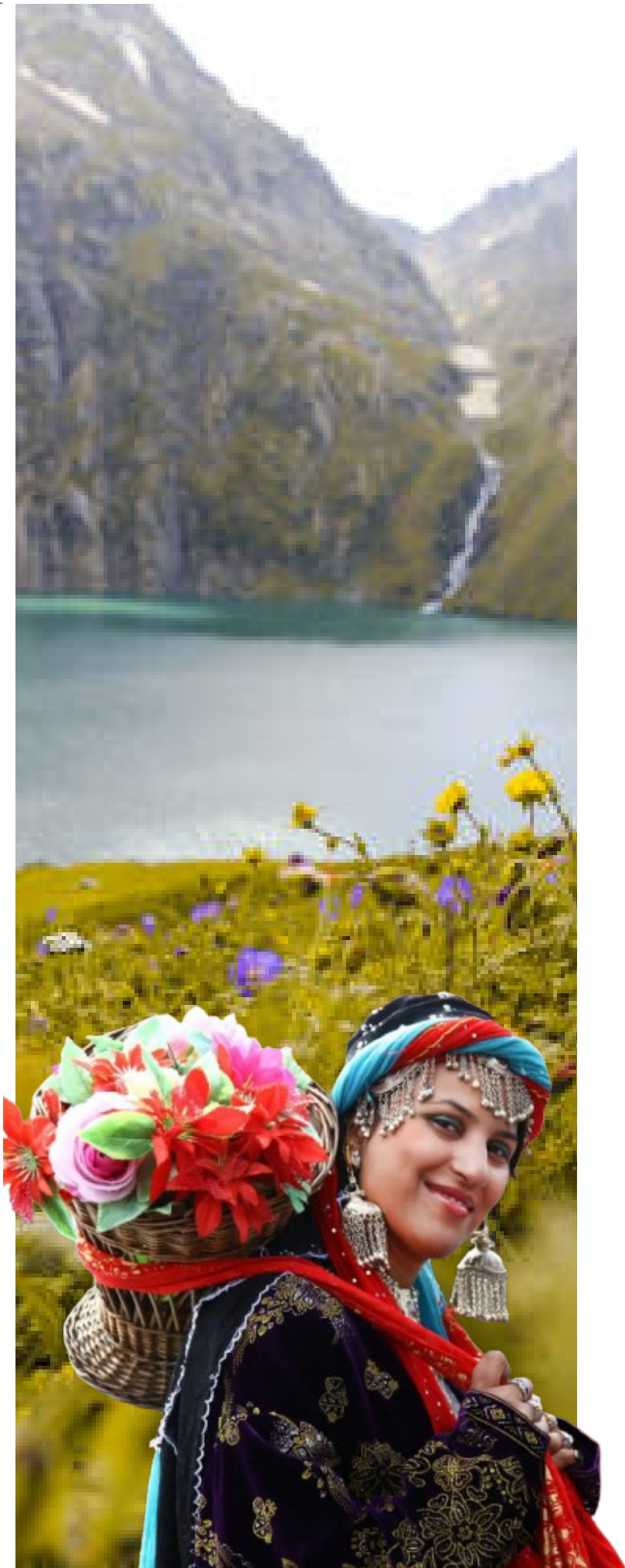
8. We will revive special border recruitments and on-the-spot recruitments for the J&K Police, Fire Brigade and Forest Protection Force.
9. We will set up a special Tourist Protection and Welfare Force.
10. We will revive the scheme for allotment of 30% contracts to unemployed engineers' groups.
11. We will convert Employment Exchanges into job placement centres and self employment guiding centres.
12. We will simplify the verification process for all government jobs, passports and other purposes by making them timebound and simplified to check undue harassment.



Welfare



We will increase the allocation of free rations from the current 5 kg to 11 kg per person, as it was earlier.



Women

1. Under the Mahila Samman Scheme we will provide ₹3,000 monthly transfers to women heads of households among economically weaker sections
2. Under Sakhi Shakti we will provide interest-free loans up to ₹5 lakh for every woman Self Help Group
3. We will provide a Beti Scholarship Scheme to the girl child.
4. We will double the state share of honorarium of Anganwadi workers, helpers, Mid Day Meal workers and Asha workers and also press the Central Government to double its share.
5. We will strengthen the ICDS by giving basic legal training to qualified HNM workers to impart awareness of women's legal rights and to aid and advise them.
6. We will set up women police cells in each police station.
7. We will encourage Panchayats to create women clubs and cultural centers.



Education

1. To provide quality and affordable education for all students, we will establish state-of-the-art model schools at the block level with comprehensive facilities.
2. We will set up model boarding schools in each district to provide equitable access to quality education.
3. We will fill vacancies at various levels to address shortages of teachers.
4. We will assure quality and affordable coaching for all with special emphasis on students belonging to weaker sections.

5. We will reconsider the admissions process for higher education including by revisiting the CUET system.

6. We will ensure affordable public transport for students.

7. We will set up modern libraries and study centers in each block to provide a conducive learning environment, especially for those preparing for competitive examinations.

8. We will make those applying for recruitments and jobs pay an exam fee only once a year.

9. We will give a one-time age relaxation to unemployed youth taking competitive exams.

10. We will add skill development centers to ITIs with part time cells in high schools to impart vocational training to youth.



Farmers & Agriculture

1. We will provide an additional ₹4,000 income support for landless, tenant, and land-owning farming households per year.
2. We will arrange 99-year leases to landless farmers cultivating state land.
3. We will ensure a ₹72/kg minimum price for apples.
4. We will provide 100% crop insurance for all crops against natural calamities.
5. We will set up a ₹2,500 crore fund for all district-level irrigation projects to ensure 100% irrigation for J&K farmers
6. We will set up wholesale grain markets in each block to minimise the costs of middlemen.
7. We will address the issue of electricity charges being imposed for the whole year and ensure they are paid according to actual use.
8. We will provide farmers with a tractor loan against a mortgage without need for a guarantor.
9. We will consider the demand for separate receiving stations in the border irrigation belt to reduce the burden of pump sets on domestic usage stations.
10. We will launch a Silk Mission to further promote the sericulture sector which has great potential in J&K.
11. We will give due attention to the sheep, goat and poultry sectors for rural development





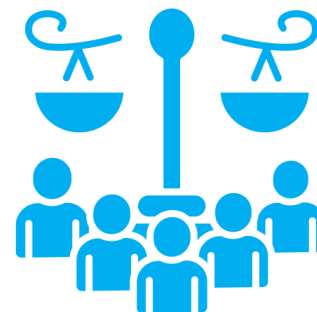
Health

1. We will provide ₹ 25 lakh health insurance coverage including treatment, diagnostics and medicines.
2. We will provide universal, affordable and accessible primary healthcare in 30 minutes via ambulance-equipped mobile clinics in every tehsil.
3. We will set up a committee of experts to suggest measures to meet the shortage of doctors and other staff, especially in rural areas, and to ensure fast track recruitment of doctors.
4. We will make the recruitment process transparent in institutions like AIIMS.

Social Justice

Congress has been the most vocal and active champion of the progress of the backward and oppressed classes and castes over the last seven decades. However, discrimination is still a reality and policies are needed to address them.

1. We will defend at all costs the rights of SC, ST, OBC, EWS and other reserved categories as enshrined in Dr Babasaheb Ambedkar's Constitution.
2. We will examine the issue of reservations in promotions.
3. We will ensure adequate OBC representation in J&K in tune with the Constitution of India.
4. We will examine the feasibility of making available state land for housing of SC, ST and OBC.
5. We will consider setting up hostels for SC, OBC and EWS, apart from ST.
6. We will immediately restore OBC students' scholarships.
7. We will address the issue of deprivation from reservations of urban potters (Kumhars), barbers, washermen and Teli in the Central List.
8. We will move towards the inclusion of an OBC member in the OBC Commission.
9. We will move towards OBC representation in the ULBs, Panchayats and in the Legislative Council when the Council is restored.
10. We will fast-track all Forest Rights Act claims to ensure justice for tribal communities.
11. We will replace inadequate tents with fabricated sheds that offer multiple classrooms and can withstand adverse weather conditions in seasonal schools for migrating tribal populations.
12. We will address the issue of electricity charges being imposed even when tribal households are absent during the migration period.
13. We will formulate Tribal Plans alongside other government plans to ensure the full utilisation of those funds.
14. We will promote the 100% electrification of remote hamlets and households using solar lights.



Forest Rights for Fringe Villages

Jammu and Kashmir's rich forest cover is best protected by the locals. However, they are denied the benefits of these forests. The government shall consider:

1. Reopening old forest depots and allowing locals to access Deodar and Pine timber.
2. Granting rights over herbs, fallen timber and grazing for forest fringe villagers under the Non-Timber Forest Produce Policy.



Minorities



1. Former Prime Minister Dr Manmohan Singh's rehabilitation programme for Kashmiri Pandits shall be revived and implemented in letter and spirit.
2. We will take further concrete steps to create a conducive atmosphere for the safe and dignified return and rehabilitation of the displaced Kashmiri Pandit community.
3. We will adopt further measures to create job opportunities for migrant youth.
4. We will ensure the protection and preservation of their sacred shrines, places and heritage and thereby respect their religious and historical sentiments.
5. A Minorities Commission will be established within the first 100 days.
6. The demand for inclusion of Punjabi in the official languages of J&K shall be considered on priority.

Pensions

1. We will explore feasible ways to restore the Old Pension Scheme for government employees.
2. We will enhance pensions for the old, widows and persons with disabilities.
3. Orphans' monthly assistance will be started.
4. We will simplify the procedure for verification at the doorstep to make it hassle-free.



Numberdar/Chowkidar



We will enhance Numberdars' and Chowkidars' honorarium and review their appointment and service conditions.



Border Residents

- 1.** We will set up a Border Area Welfare and Development Board to address the special needs of the residents of the border areas.
- 2.** Will will consider on a priority basis land compensation for farmers in border areas including state and EP land taken over by the Army.
- 3.** We will upgrade dilapidated bunkers to ensure that they are usable by border residents and will set up a mechanism to review complaints.
- 4.** We will construct border residents' bhawans in safer zones.
- 5.** We will address the complaint of pending power bills during the period of their migration due to Pakistani firing across the border.
- 6.** We will examine the demand for segregation of the reservation quota of residents of the Actual Line of Control and the International Border.

Lawyers & Journalists

1. We will establish Press Clubs and media centres in each district headquarters.
2. We will consider demands for travel concessions for journalists.
3. We will resume accreditation of journalists which has been stopped since 2022.
4. We will consider an insurance and pension policy for journalists.
5. We will re-examine government advertisement rates.
6. We will ensure proper infrastructure for lawyers and the litigant public in Court premises.
7. We will constitute an expert committee for advocates' welfare measures in consultation with the representatives of the Bar within the shortest possible time.



Narcotic Drugs & Intoxicants



1. The government shall adopt a full scale war against the menace of drugs which is destroying the future of the youth of J&K.

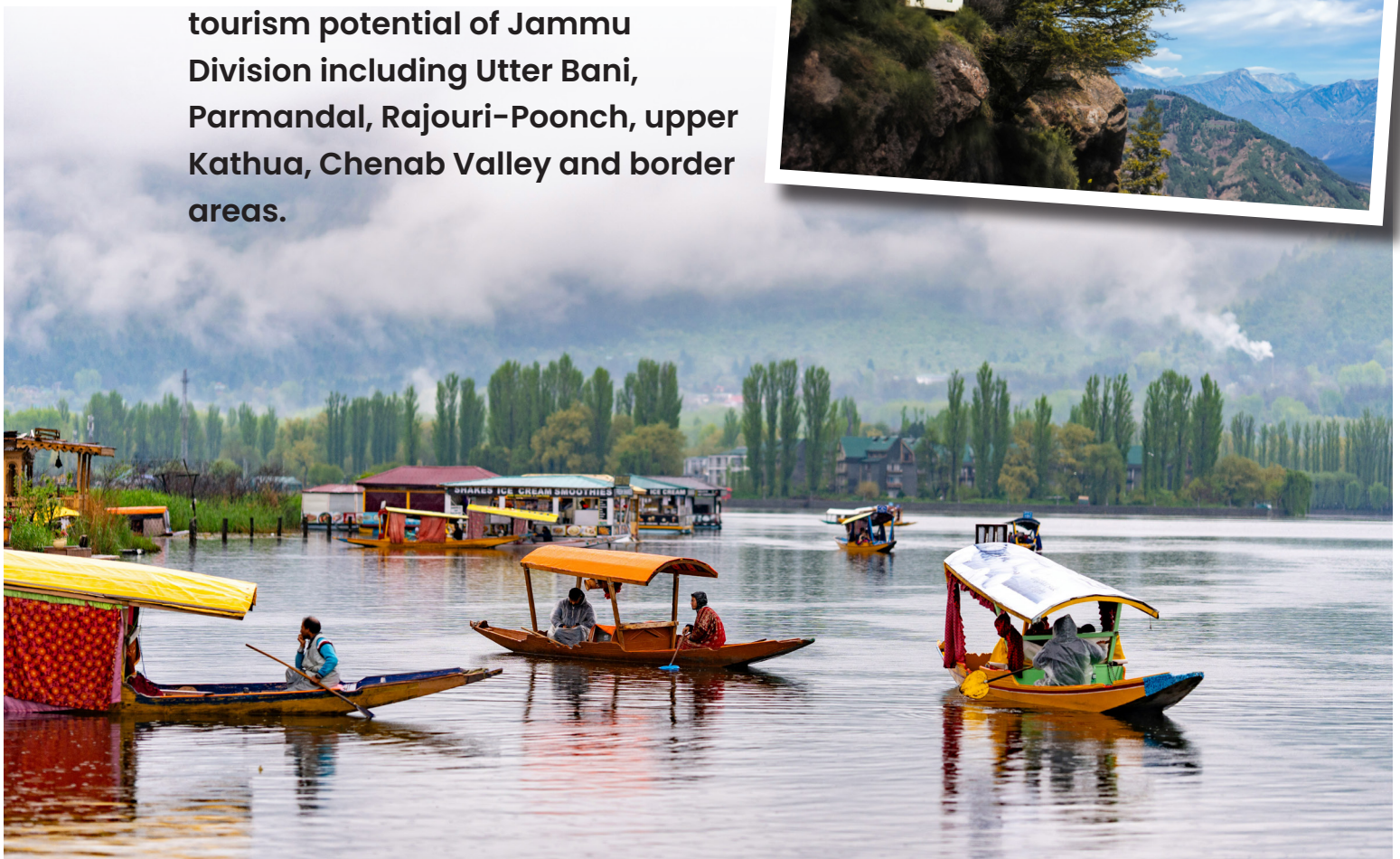
2. We will set up modern de-addiction and rehabilitation centers for affected youth.

3. We will strictly regulate the mushrooming of liquor shops in every nook and corner facilitated by the BJP administration.

4. We will also review the excise policy.

Tourism

1. The tourism sector will be declared as an industry.
2. We will develop more scenic locations and unexplored destinations with proper connectivity and infrastructure to boost this sector.
3. We will complete the lake beautification project in Jammu city in the shortest possible time.
4. We will develop the underdeveloped and unexplored tourism potential of Jammu Division including Utter Bani, Parmandal, Rajouri-Poonch, upper Kathua, Chenab Valley and border areas.
5. We will regulate tourist transport facilities, including ensuring fair transport charges.
6. We will take up a proper policy to regulate and ensure the welfare of transporters, ponywallas, guides and sledge workers.



Mahatma Gandhi Rural Employment Guarantee Act

1. MGNREGA has been a lifeline for rural areas, especially during the pandemic. We propose inclusion of snow clearance in rural areas during the winter months.
2. We will withdraw mandatory online attendance and face authentication until reliable network coverage is available.
3. We will ensure timely payments to vendors and enhanced salaries for employees governing the scheme.



Electricity & Power Projects

1. J&K will get first rights to the hydropower produced in the state. With this power we will aim to guarantee 24 x 7 electricity across Jammu & Kashmir.
2. We will provide free electricity up to 100 units per month for BPL households.
3. We will actively pursue the return of NHPC hydel projects to J&K.
4. NHPC will be asked to fulfill its social commitment of providing free electricity to residents within 10 km of the vicinity of hydro projects.
5. The government will suspend the installation of smart meters until there is a consensus.
6. We will revise flat rates taking into account the economic status of households.
7. We will encourage and promote solar power energy and provide adequate subsidies to the people to wean them off the grid and to reduce their consumption of grid energy.
8. The government will reduce power transmission losses and provide periodic incentives to honest consumers who make regular payments.
9. Granting amnesty to the domestic and commercial consumers on pending bills shall be considered.
10. Mini Hydel projects to be set up wherever possible.
11. We will explore the scope for thermal power projects including revival of the Kalakote Thermal Power Project.

Environment and Climate Change

- 1.** We will Promote climate-resilient agriculture and sustainable livelihoods to adapt to changing weather patterns and reduce environmental impact.
- 2.** We will conserve and restore water bodies and wetlands through comprehensive water management and anti-pollution measures.
- 3.** We will expand renewable energy infrastructure and green initiatives, such as solar power and afforestation, to reduce carbon footprints and enhance climate resilience.



Ex-Servicemen

1. We will give priority attention to the issues of Ex-Servicemen and Ex-Paramilitary Forces including demands for ECHS facilities, tax exemption on CSD items and extension of CSD facilities to Paramilitary personnel.
2. We will consider the construction of Sainik Bhawans at different locations.

Roads, bridges and tunnels

1. We will construct and improve the road connectivity, especially in the rural and remote areas of Jammu and Kashmir
2. We will take up the issue of construction of tunnels and bridges on vital road links with the Central Government, including the tunnel on the Mughal road for alternative all-weather Jammu-Srinagar

connectivity, a tunnel from Kupwara to Karnah, Bandipora to Gurez and other such links.

Railways

1. We will work with the Central Government to bring back focus on neglected railway projects like the Jammu-Poonch, Katra-Shivkhori extension, Kathua-Mahanpur-Bhasoli and Bhandarwah-Kishtwar connections.
2. We will pursue the demand for a DRM office in Jammu, the renaming of the Hiranagar railway station and the restoration of train stops between Kathua and Jammu suspended during Covid-19.

Industry

1. We will review J&K's industrial policy with a focus on the local entrepreneurs, especially those establishing jobs-generating MSMEs. We will also encourage



investments from the rest of the country.

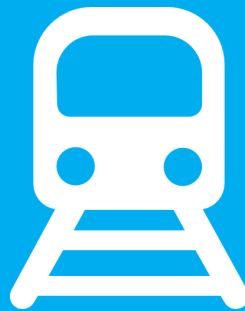
2. We will set up new industrial estates in rural areas with complete infrastructure for local industries to come up with the twin purpose of economic development and the creation of jobs.
3. We will make the so far arbitrary allotment of land to the outside industry fair and transparent with a focus on local entrepreneurs.
4. The establishment of hazardous industries shall be regulated to save the health of the people.
5. The government will take steps to ensure the provision of jobs to local youths.
6. We will ensure adherence to labour protection and welfare

norms in the case of contract labour.

7. We will strengthen and promote handicrafts, cottage industries, and the traditional paintings of Bani and Basohli.

Transport

1. Transportation has suffered due to a huge hike in fees and taxes such as permit fee, token tax, fitness fee, insurance etc. The government shall revisit the present rates of fee and taxes to give relief to the transport sector.
2. We will consider the demand of transporters to treat the sector as an industry.
3. We will devise mechanisms to help those sections. auto operators whose business has suffered with the introduction of new modes of public



transport such as Tata Magic operators.

Security

- 1.** The government shall take adequate measures to ensure the safety and security of the people, especially of the Minorities. We will strengthen the security network, including the self defense mechanism in the sensitive areas, to counter the rise of militancy with the participation of the people.
- 2.** The government shall set up additional pickets where required in sensitive areas to remove insecurity.
- 3.** While there will be no compromise on the issue of controlling terrorism, a fair and just system shall be put in place to prevent undue harassment to innocent people. The cases of those lodged in different jails without trial will be examined under law by a competent authority for needful action.

Land Registration

- 1.** We will review the present system of registration of sale,

transfer of land after inviting suggestions from the general public and stakeholders.

- 2.** We will reexamine the unprecedented hike in the stamp duty rates, court fee and other registration fee to give relief to the people.

Mining

- 1.** The government will strictly regulate mining which during the past ten years has led to over-exploitation, loot, corruption and excessive price rise of sand, bajri, marble etc.
- 2.** We will ensure fairness in the regulation of new areas of mining such as sapphire in Kishtwar and lithium in Reasi.
- 3.** We will take urgent measures to ensure that traditional river mining rights as well as the rights of labourers, ponywallas and nearby residents are protected.







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